The stock of wheat in the Central Pool on 01.07.2007 was lower than the buffer norms.

(d) During 2007-08, the anticipated requirement of wheat and rice in the country for TPDS and welfare schemes is 140 lakh tonnes and 260 lakh tonnes, respectively. For meeting this requirement, apart from domestic procurement of 111 lakh tonnes of wheat, the Government has decided to import upto 50 lakh tonnes of wheat.

Tenders for import of wheat by Government agencies

†43. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that tenders for importing wheat had been invited by Government agencies at international level in July, 2007;

(b) if so, the number of institutions that submitted tenders for wheat import;

(c) whether the minimum rates therein were between 318 to 370 dollars per tonne;

(d) if not, the facts thereof;

(e) the reasons for this difference between 318 to 370 dollars in minimum rates; and

(f) the quantum of wheat permitted to be imported finally alongwith the names of the firms from which it has to be imported and the rates thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Seven bidders submitted their bids for the tenders for import of wheat.

(c) The bids received ranged from US $ 317.95 to US $ 370.00 PMT C&F (FO).

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The bids received from the suppliers against global tenders were on the basis of different origin, arrival period, discharge ports, freight and other commercial considerations.

(f) 5.11 lakh tonnes of wheat has been permitted to be imported as follows:

Name of Supplier	Quantity (+/-5%)	Price (US $ Per MT C&F(FO)
TOEPFER International, Asia, Singapore	1.28	317.95
CARGILL International, S.A., Singapore	0.65	324.10
CARGILL International, S.A., Singapore	0.65	327.10

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

Name of Supplier	Quantity (+/-5%)	Price (US $ Per MT C&F(FO)
TOEPFER International, Asia, Singapore	1.28	328.95
RIAS Trading S.A., Switzerland	1.25	329.95
GRAND TOTAL:	5.11	Weighted Average Price is US $ 325.59 PMT C&F (FO)

Report Regarding American Wheat

†44. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any report has been drafted regarding American wheat;

(b) whether any harmful elements have been found in the wheat:

(c) the reasons for preventing the publication of report; and

(d) the steps Government are contemplating to take to reject the consignment in case it is found to be harmful?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) No specific report has been drafted regarding American wheat. However, as part of ongoing bilateral negotiations, plant health bilateral discussions were held with the United States of America (USA) in May, 2007. The discussions covered various bilateral matters, *inter-alia*, import of wheat and pulses into India from the USA. The request of the USA for relaxation of phytosanitary norms regarding tolerance levels of quarantine weed seeds in wheat consignments was not accepted by India, in view of likely threat of entry of quarantine weeds into the country, which do not exist presently in India.

(d) No import consignments, not conforming with the Phytosanitary specifications prescribed under Plant Quarantine (Regulation of Import into India) Order, 2003 will be permitted entry into the country.

Import of wheat

†45. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had decided to import wheat to meet the requirement of safe storage of foodgrains in the country:

(b) if so, the date on which such decision was taken:

(c) whether it is also a fact that the price of wheat was 263 dollars per tonne in the international market at the time of taking the decision of such import by Government; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.